



2009 Session

Exhibit: 1

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1. Travelers Rest

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EXHIBIT

1

DATE

1/13/09

HB

167

(408) 273-4253
www.travelersrest.org

Comments in support of HB 167

Delivered to the Montana House of Representatives, Appropriations Committee
January 11, 2009

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I will begin by telling you that Traveler's Rest is the only scientifically proven Lewis and Clark campsite in the country. But the history of the place the Salish call Tmsmli goes back thousands of years.

Our Associations has had a strong and productive partnership with FWP and we hope it will continue for many years. House Bill 167 is the result of a Task Force created in 2007 at the direction of then FWP Director Jeff Hagener. At that time, both the Travelers' Rest Preservation and Heritage Association (Association) and FWP recognized that the current management structure at Travelers' Rest State Park was not sustainable. While our Association is able and willing to raise funds for education and interpretive programming, we are unable to generate sufficient funds from the private sector to pay for day to operating and management costs. The consensus of this group was that the best course for the future of this national historic treasure was to have Montana State Parks assume the responsibility for day to day management and operations at Travelers' Rest State Park. After all, this is something they do for 50 of the 51 parks in the Montana State Parks System. By changing our partnership, we could utilize the strengths of the two organizations. With FWP managing the lands and facilities, the Association will be able to focus on our mission of providing high quality, place-based education and interpretation to thousands of visitors and students each year.

About that time we were approached by our neighbors and longtime supporters Bill and Ramona Holt with the opportunity of lifetime. On land adjacent to the Park, Mr. and Mrs. Holt have completed construction of a visitor center and a 10,000 square foot museum complete with a collection of exhibits and artifacts. They would now like to donate the building, the collection and the land under and adjacent to the building to FWP as part of Travelers' Rest State Park. It is a wonderfully magnanimous gesture on the part of these lifelong collectors of Montana history who are looking to create a legacy for

Travelers' Rest and the Lolo community. It is clear that this donation would immediately make Travelers' Rest a destination for residents and visitors alike, it is also obvious to all of us involved – including the Holts and FWP – that our local non-profit Association cannot possibly manage, maintain AND interpret this addition to our National Historic Landmark and State Park.

We understand these are trying economic times for Montanans and Americans. But we also believe in the power of this ancient place to inspire future generations of Montanans to care about their culture and history. And we do not come to the table empty handed. Over the past seven years, our Association has invested approximately \$1.5 million in the operation, development and interpretation of Travelers' Rest. Should HB 167 pass, we intend to continue to spend \$100,000 or more each year to provide the programming that is the hallmark of any visit to Travelers' Rest State Park. We are also blessed with an incredible corps of volunteers, some of whom you will hear from in a few minutes. Each year, they donate in-kind contributions of time and services in excess of \$50,000 – a number we expect to increase dramatically with the addition of a year round facility and increased visitation. Additionally, while the appraisals of the vast collections from the Holts are still being completed, there is no doubt that the value of their potential donation will be in excess of \$1 million. HB 167 asks for \$280,000 for the next biennium – an amount to be matched by at least \$1.3 million in private contributions. I don't know any investor who would turn down a 4:1 return on their money in any economic situation. According to economic impact estimates developed during park planning, a fully functional Travelers' Rest, complete with museum, visitor center and year round programming would generate approximately \$3 million dollars per year in revenues for businesses across the Glacier Country region.

I would like to share with you what has happened at Travelers' Rest over the past couple of weeks. For the past 6 years we have held a Winter Storytelling Series, continuing the tradition of the plateau tribes such as the Salish and Nez Perce. We've considered the series a success when we've drawn an average of 25-30 people to the programs. An exceptional day was 40 and the most we had attend a program in the first 5 years was about 60. We began our 6th series a couple of weeks ago, but this year we asked the Holts if we might hold the programs in the museum as a way to showcase the opportunity offered to Montanans. Simply by holding the series in this new facility – complete with flush toilets, seats with backs and a heating system - we have tripled our previous average attendance. This facility legitimizes

the importance of this national historic site and elevates it to a destination for locals and cultural tourists around the globe.

I am proud of the work we do at Travelers' Rest. We have taken 15 acres, a house and garage and in less than 8 years created a 40 acre park that embraces the history of Montana back to before a group of weary travelers chose to camp on the banks of a stream Meriwether Lewis called "Travellers Rest." Using professional educators we have developed curriculum that draw more than 3,000 students each year – students that come not only from Lolo and Missoula, but from the length of the Bitterroot Valley, the Clark Fork and Mission valleys, and from such places as Dallas, Texas and Washington, DC. However, our Association cannot continue to foot the bill for management and operations of the site. If HB 167 fails, we will be forced to relegate operations to FWP sometime in the very near future, which will mean that FWP will need to fund maintenance and operations of this site at the expense of other parks in the system. Without this funding, this national historic treasure will become nothing more than another wayside along Montana's highways. But with your help, Travelers' Rest can become a place to touch, taste and hear history. A place where people can learn about their culture and others; a place where students from across Montana can feel what it was like for Lewis and Clark 200 years ago –and the Salish people 2000 years ago. A place of pride for all Montanans. Please support HB 167. Thank you.

TRAVELER'S REST STATE PARK: 2009 AND BEYOND

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Why can't TRPHA continue to fund park operations as per the current Management Agreement?

TRPHA has had to overcome many fundraising hurdles in order to fund Travelers' Rest so far; two of those are now proving insurmountable. First, because Travelers' Rest is a designated State Park and a National Historic Landmark, there is a natural assumption that those designations come with public funding. Convincing the public of the reality that they don't is a process that often ends with the visitor or potential donor simply stating, "Well, the government SHOULD do it." The second hurdle is the end of funding specific to the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. For instance, TRPHA was very successful in receiving funds through the National Park Service Challenge Cost Share Program, winning awards in excess of \$250,000. Funding for this program was cut by 99% in 2007.

Why isn't the request for funding part of the normal FWP legislative budget request?

This is a unique situation; Montana State Parks is being asked to assume operation of a previously existing, fully-functional state park. Although this request is less than the operations budgets for similar State Parks, to include this in the existing State Parks budget would do irreparable harm to existing State Parks. That is not the intent of TRPHA or any of our partners. In order to protect the funding for the other parks in Montana, as well as illustrate the unique issues facing Travelers' Rest, it was determined the introduction of a stand alone bill request for funding was appropriate.

What happens if this funding request is denied?

Quite simply, TRPHA will cease to exist by the middle of 2009. While Travelers' Rest State Park may continue to function on a very limited basis through volunteers, park hours would be very restricted, and nearly all programming would cease. The donation of the museum and visitor center would not take place. Not only would this have a severe impact on visitors, school children and residents of the area, it would also leave this piece of State property and a National Historic Landmark open to vandalism and inappropriate use.

What happens if the funding is approved?

Travelers' Rest immediately becomes a significant hub for tourism and education in western Montana. With the addition of the Holt collection and the museum, Travelers' Rest attracts additional, increased segment of the population. By allowing TRPHA to focus its talents and resources on education and interpretive programming, the site takes great strides forward in providing critical resources for teachers, residents and the thousands of visitors to the area.

Can the proposal be implemented incrementally and still accomplish the goals?

Possibly. Less staffing would mean shorter hours and/or restricted access to Travelers' Rest. It might also mean a continued backlog of major maintenance projects.

Can this proposal benefit more State Parks?

Yes. The partners believe that a fully staffed Travelers' Rest could also manage Council Grove State Park near Missoula and Fort Owen State Park near Stevensville. Each of these parks could be helped by increased management and programming. Because of the nature of these parks, they fit well with the interpretive stories and Travelers' Rest.

**Anticipated Budget Travelers' Rest State Park
July 2009 to June 2011**

Description	Amount	Percentage
Revenue & In-Kind		
Montana State Parks	\$280,000	46%
Travelers' Rest Preservation & Heritage Association	\$215,000	35%
	\$ 115,000	19%
Total Revenue:	\$610,000	
Expenses:		
Personnel – Park Management	\$245,000	
Personnel – Educational Services	\$135,000	
Personnel – Interpretive Services	\$115,000	
Park Maintenance	\$ 60,000	
Supplies & Equipment	\$ 55,000	
Total Expenses	\$610,000	

Future Management

With the increased infrastructure and management needs already evident, it will become impossible for TRPFA to fund or manage the Park. Knowing this, TRPFA and MSP have been in discussions for several months about the future management structure and model for Travelers' Rest. At the direction of their Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Director N.H. Engerer, a task force was appointed in 2007 that included representatives from MSP, the TRPFA Board of Directors, and Travelers' Rest volunteers. Although the group continues to hear on the specifics of a new Management Agreement, they have agreed on a partnership framework for the future management and operation of Travelers' Rest State Park.

Montana State Parks would assume the responsibility of day-to-day management and maintenance of the Park, the grounds and building.

Montana State Parks would also assume the responsibility for staffing the Visitor Center and Museum and any associated book store, as well as other cash operations.

TRPFA will continue to provide education and interpretive programs at Travelers' Rest State Park. This will include funding, working, training and staffing.

The Volunteer List has been critical to the success of Travelers' Rest and this must not be lost. Any future partnership will maintain the participation of these dedicated community members.

TRPFA will also work to develop new programs and events to better illustrate and highlight the history of this ancient trail road, while also attracting new visitors and supporters to Travelers' Rest.

TRPFA and MSP will work with existing partners and interested organizations, including the Lolo Community, the United Verde Club and Kootenai Tribes, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Missoula County, Lolo School, Glacier County, Trout Unlimited, the Northwest Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Travelers' Rest Chapter of the Lolo and Chief Joseph Historic Foundation, to continue to make Travelers' Rest a unique attraction for the region of Montana.

It is acknowledged that this new agreement will require mutual compromise on the part of State Parks for staffing, equipment and ongoing operations. It is also acknowledged that there will need to be clearly defined roles and communications between the two partners in order for the Park to function effectively and efficiently.

By sharing the strengths of the two partners and the addition of a public and wonderful collection from MR and Mrs. Holt, Travelers' Rest will become a permanent destination for residents of the area and visitors to Montana and the Intermountain Valley. MSP's park management expertise will provide security and professional management resources. TRPFA's experience and interest in educational programs and opportunities will continue to mark the Park and the Association as quality providers of history-based, multi-disciplinary education programs. It is essential that all parts of this new partnership be implemented at the earliest opportunity, so that the momentum that has been generated thus far is not lost.

Budget

MR & Mrs. Holt for \$20,000 in one-time funding for the next year. With TRPFA's continued commitment to programming and the strong volunteer corps, this will amount to roughly half of the funding used to manage, operate and interpret Travelers' Rest State Park.

Travelers' Rest State Park Estimated Expenses, July 2009 – June 2010

Description	Amount	Percentage
Montana State Parks	\$260,000	49.6%
Travelers' Rest Preservation and Heritage Foundation	\$160,000	29.4%
Individuals and In-kind contributions	\$125,000	20.9%

With increased focus on programming and fundraising, TRPFA expects to be able to increase program offerings (and associated funding) by 15% per year from 2010-2015. At the end of 2015, TRPFA expects a program budget of approximately \$145,000 annually.

TRPHA Programming

Travelers' Rest first opened its doors to school field trips in 2002, the first year the park was open to the public. In that first year 60 students took part in 1 field trip. By 2007, that number has increased to more than 3,500 students from more than 30 schools – and more than 70 field trips. TRPHA hires professional education staff to develop and implement the education strategies of the organization; to ensure that educational programs meet local, county and state curricula standards or guidelines; and to market, schedule and lead the field trips.

TRPHA's 501(c)(3) status is gained by definition as an educational organization. In addition to the unique educational offerings for elementary and middle school children, over the past 5 years, the Association has developed an active and professional interpretive program that provides personal interpretation using paid staff and a cadre of trained volunteers. Also, TRPHA has initiated many ongoing programs for the community and area visitors, including a Winter Storytelling Series, the Uncover Montana speakers' series, a series of workshops and campfire programs. TRPHA is also working with Lolo School to develop an outdoor classroom at the Park, providing a site based experience for science, language arts, social studies, and other subjects.

The Board of Directors of the Association has expressed a keen interest in continuing to fund and provide programs that benefit the western Montana community and visitors to the area.

Future Opportunity

One of the missing pieces to Travelers' Rest has been a permanent, all-season Visitor Center and educational area. There is also concern about existing open space lands that surround the park. As urban development increases in western Montana, these open spaces adjacent to existing public lands become increasingly rare.

Two of the great supporters of Travelers' Rest over the years have been William and Ramona Holt, neighbors to Travelers' Rest. Mr. and Mrs. Holt sold a 10 acre parcel to MSP in 2002 that eventually became the park entrance. They have also donated a road easement through their property from U.S. Highway 12 to the park lands and a conservation and trail easement on 10 acres adjoining Travelers' Rest (the value of this donation was used to leverage Land and Water Conservation Fund monies that were used to add additional lands to the park). This latter acreage is primarily along riparian lands of Lolo Creek, providing important habitat protection. They own land that connects the existing Travelers' Rest State Park to U.S. Highway 12 – land that is mostly undeveloped.

The Holts are long-time collectors of western art and historic artifacts and have amassed a unique collection that is currently displayed in a private museum they own directly north of the Park entrance. Over the past several years, the Holts have had a series of discussions with MSP and TRPHA about potential uses for all or part of their collection, as well as the additional lands they own that abut the Park.

In late 2007, these discussions culminated with the following tentative agreement:

- Mr. and Mrs. Holt have completed an existing structure on lands they own adjacent to the Park. This structure will be approximately 10,000 square feet.
- Into this building will be moved much of the collection of Native American items the Holts own. These will be displayed in a professional manner in one section of the building.
- Other items will also be moved into the building, which has been used in the past as the "Wild West Wagon Works" to display a collection of historical wagons and a re-created frontier Main Street.
- Offices and an all season educational and program area will be created in this building.
- The Holts will donate the building, its contents, the land on which the building and parking lot are located and other existing structures to MSP.
- The completed building will be used as a museum and Travelers' Rest Visitor Center.
- The Holts will also donate the fee title to the 10 acres previously placed in conservation easement.

This generous agreement would address many of the pressing issues facing Travelers' Rest.

- The addition of a permanent Visitor Center will give an air of authenticity to this National Historic Landmark and provide space for permanent exhibits and interpretation.
- The 10,000 square feet of space will provide ample room for year-round programming.
- The addition of the Museum provides another attraction for visitors, leading to an increase in Park visitation.
- The agreement will permanently protect approximately 15 acres of open space land adjacent to the Park.

Upon consummation of this agreement, Travelers' Rest immediately becomes a first class cultural attraction for the Missoula and Bitterroot areas.

November 2003	Kulberg acquisition (4.5 acres)	TRPHA		
January 2004	Holt easement (10 acres)	Donation from William and Ramona Holt		
April 2004	Scullion acquisition (11.5 acres)	LWCF	TRPHA	Donation from William and Monica Scullion
October 2005	TRPHA sells Kulberg parcel to MSP	LWCF		

Early plans for the park included moving the entrance from the residential neighborhood along Mormon Creek Road to the more rural landscape along US Highway 12. In addition to providing a better experience for Park visitors, this approach would also reduce potential impacts to the Lewis and Clark campsite as the park was developed. The purchase of 10 acres on the north side of Lolo Creek in 2002 was the first phase of implementing this plan. In 2004, access road and parking for construction was completed on the north side of the Park. In 2005 TRPHA completed the transition to the new entrance by creating a yurt to act as a Visitor Center and greeting area, volunteers, an improved interpretive trail and a pedestrian bridge over Lolo Creek to connect the two pieces of Travelers' Rest.

Park visitation increased annually from 2002 through 2005, peaking at approximately 25,000. After the close of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, visitation decreased to the range of 16,000-20,000 annually.

TRPHA Funding

Even before the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial fervor was beginning, TRPHA had success in fund raising. With an early grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and a later appropriation from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for park operations and land acquisitions, the Association was able to develop the park and associated educational and interpretive programming. The Association had success in project specific fundings through the National Park Service Challenge Cost Share Program.

With the end of the Bicentennial in 2006, however, many of those government sources of funding disappeared. For instance, TRPHA received nearly \$250,000 between 2002 and 2005 from the Lewis and Clark Challenge Cost Share Program. At the close of the Bicentennial, the Department of Interior cut funding for this program by 92%.

While government grants have been important, they are not a sustainable source of funding for operations, management or maintenance. In fact, more than 75% of all funds raised by non-profit organizations in the United States come from individual donors. One of the great challenges that the Association has faced in raising funds from the private sector has been an assumption and expectation on the part of the public that a place designated a National Historic Landmark and a Montana State Park would be managed, maintained and operated by a government agency.

Where TRPHA does continue to have success is generating revenue for programming. While private donors are reluctant to open their wallets to fund operations of a public venue, they are more inclined to donate for educational and interpretive programming.

Under the current operating environment, TRPHA will be unable to continue operation of Travelers' Rest park and MSP.

¹ LWCF match for this acquisition came from the remaining value of the Deschamps property and the full value of the Holt conservation easement donation.

² LWCF match for this acquisition was TRPHA donating more than half the value of the property to MSP.

Travelers' Rest State Park – "Exploring the Past, Navigating the Future"

Case Statement – Increased Funding and Management

January 12, 2009

Historical Significance

Travelers' Rest is a campsite used by the Lewis and Clark Expedition from September 9-11, 1805 and again from June 30 – July 3, 1806. It was at this point, a fulcrum of the most treacherous part of their journey, that the Captains and the members of the expedition made many critical decisions leading to the ultimate success of their journey. However, long before European-Americans arrived in what is now the Bitterroot valley, the area the Salish people call Trisuli (No Salmon) was a critical crossroads of culture and commerce where people from across the region came to exchange goods and information and to strengthen family ties and inter-tribal alliances.

In 2002, archeologist Dan Hall and his team uncovered physical evidence of the Lewis and Clark Expedition along the south side of Lolo Creek. To date, this is the only one of the more than 500 campsites along the 3,000-mile length of the Lewis and Clark Trail where physical evidence has been found. The site was designated a National Historic Landmark by the U.S. Department of Interior in 2006.

Background

In the mid 1990's, the Travelers' Rest Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage foundation began to search for the exact location of the Travelers' Rest site. By the latter part of the decade, various research projects had narrowed the scope of the search to a small area on the south bank of Lolo Creek. Discovery of a Tombac button in 1998 elevated the search for the site to a national level. Residential encroachment led the National Trust for Historic Preservation to list Travelers' Rest as one of "America's 11 Most Endangered Places" in 1999. By 2001, the most likely location of the campsite had been identified as lying on a 15 acre parcel owned by Pat and Emile Deschamps. The Conservation Fund, using a donation from the Richard "King" Mellon Foundation, agreed to purchase the land from the Deschamps family. The donation required that the land be placed in public ownership.

Montana State Parks (MSP) agreed to accept the donation of land and designated the 15 acres Travelers' Rest State Park on March 31, 2001. However, the political and fiscal realities of the time did not allow MSP to commit any funding to the project. At that time, the Montana Community Development Corporation (MCDC) was working with a group of Lolo community and Missoula County representatives to increase cultural tourism to the Lolo area during the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. This grassroots group of individuals agreed to form an educational non-profit organization and to accept all funding, management, preservation, interpretive and educational responsibilities for the Travelers' Rest site. On March 31, 2001 MSP and MCDC entered into a Management Agreement for Travelers' Rest State Park. When the Travelers' Rest Preservation and Heritage Association (TRPHA or Association) officially formed on June 30, 2001, MCDC passed this responsibility on to TRPHA.

Travelers' Rest State Park Development and Growth

Established in 2001, the Park did not officially open to the public until May, 2002. Due to the lack of services, access to the park was limited in the beginning, and expanded as more amenities were added. Originally the Park was only 15 acres and visitors were greeted in a garage leftover from the previous owners. As MSP and TRPHA worked together, the Park and learning and recreational opportunities expanded. By the summer of 2003, Travelers' Rest had grown to more than 40 acres in fee title ownership, with an additional 10 acres under a conservation and trail easement. A timeline of this development and sources of funding:

Date	Acquired property	Source 1	Source 2	Source 3
March 2001	Deschamps (15 acres)	Richard "King" Mellon Foundation		
July 2002	Holt acquisition (10 acres)	Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) ¹		

¹ LWCF requires a 1:1 match for funding. For this purchase, the source of the match was partial value of the donation of the Deschamps property to MSP.